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EDITORIAL NOTES

The possibilities of the library in connection with school work have never been fully realized by teachers. The teacher, like the average citizen, draws books from the library and reads them and hands them in again without having done anything to make the material in the books readily accessible in the future. How often one remembers vaguely that he read a month ago just the facts which he now needs for immediate use, but the source of the needed information has been forgotten and the facts themselves have grown very hazy in memory. If one had only made a note! Such a note properly recorded would be useful not only for one's own private use but also for the use of others. When a teacher refers a class to the library in a general way there is very little chance that the reference will be productive. If, on the other hand, a teacher will give children a few precise references, the use of the library will be encouraged and made productive. What is needed in our schools is more systematic, intelligent use of libraries.

We are all convinced that supplementary reading has come to stay in our schools. The best kind of supplementary reading is that which the children get by going to books in the library. Such supplementary reading not only yields information but it gives training in the methods of research which will be of lasting benefit throughout life. A body of facts which the pupil has "run down" in the library is very much more significant for his training than a body of facts set forth in some short book which requires nothing of the pupil but the effort of reading. The difficulty which the child encounters when he tries to "run down" the facts for himself are the familiar difficulties of finding readily what is in a large collection of

books. The searching of books is an art in itself. Someone must go over the books and make the matter in them accessible. Someone must help the child at first to approach books intelligently. Thus we come again to the conclusion that teachers should learn to use books and to guide children in the use of books.

Training of the kind which has been advocated in the foregoing paragraphs can be very advantageously gained in the school library. Let a grade with the help of the teacher begin to make a card catalogue of a few subjects. Here are perhaps ten books on American history, and each one contains some material on Washington. Where is this material? Let a card or series of cards be made referring to all of the significant passages on Washington. Again, the grade is studying Asia. Where can anyone find information about Asia? Let all the references be compiled by the grade. Once the child has contributed to the preparation of a card catalogue he will see the value of the big catalogue in the public library. He will realize the value of an index. He will open with some interest Poole's *Index* and like aids to the library user. The teacher will find that the work of next year will be made lighter and that there will be a genuine stimulus to research in the achievements of the grade of the year before.

Even if the teacher were not interested in developing this kind of ability in the pupils there would still be ample reason for urging on members of our profession the importance of becoming acquainted with library methods. No one who teaches can afford to fall behind in his acquisition of new facts, and the only way to keep up with new facts is to collect them systematically. The librarians of this country have carried the methods of systematic classification of library material farther than it has been carried anywhere else in the world. In the last two decades this country has taken the unquestioned lead in all matters of library technique. Teachers cannot afford to be ignorant of this technique. The librarians have perfected the art of using books; we who depend on books must learn their art.

There are promising signs that the future will realize very fully this transfer of the librarian's art to the school. Here and
School there libraries are found in close co-operation with
Librarians the schools through the enterprise of librarian and interested teachers. Public libraries are establishing branches in schools. These can be made more than mere distributing centers; they can be made and are being made centers for wholesome training in methods of using books. Finally, there is a very great demand for librarians especially trained in the handling of children's books. The Pittsburg library has a school for the training of children's librarians, and the demands for the products of this school far outrun the available supply. All these signs are encouraging. They indicate what can be done now that attention is turned in this direction. They also serve to call the attention of each individual teacher to his and her opportunity of taking advantage at the earliest possible moment of all that is to be derived from systematic methods of using books.